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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the definition and historical development of the Carnegie classification for Comprehensive Universities and Colleges I and II by referring to specific examples in each category. It then identifies several significant characteristics of these institutions, noting their historic underpinnings as teachers colleges. The paper next addresses several major issues currently confronting comprehensive institutions, including their upward drift and the desire of some of these institutions to award doctorates. It concludes with four recommendations to comprehensive institutions regarding mission, finances, accountability, and teaching. Contains 97 references. (Author)

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Caught in "Upward Drift": An Assessment of Comprehensive Universities and Colleges

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Caught in "Upward Drift": An Assessment of Comprehensive Universities and Colleges

Abstract

This paper reviews the definition and historical development of the Carnegie classification Comprehensive Universities and Colleges I and II by referring to specific examples in each category. It then identifies several significant characteristics of these institutions, noting their historic underpinnings as teachers colleges. The paper next addresses several major issues currently confronting comprehensive institutions, including their upward drift and the desire of some institutions to award the doctorate. It concludes with four recommendations regarding mission, finances, accountability, and teaching that they might act on in the coming years.

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Caught in "Upward Drift": An Assessment of Comprehensive Universities and Colleges

DEFINITION AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

A Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, published by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, estimated that in 1987 there were 595 comprehensive universities and colleges in the United States (5). A 1990 count by *U.S. News and World Report* identifies 561 of these institutions whose primary mission is to educate and serve those students who seek professional and occupational degrees. These institutions range in size from San Diego State, with 35,582 students, to Our Lady of Holy Cross College in Louisiana, with an enrollment of only 822 (Brownlee 128).

Having a total population of 3.4 million, these universities offer students a tremendously large array of choices. According to Brownlee, many of these institutions "provide both the kinds of professional programs found at large state universities and the intimate setting of a liberal-arts college" (128). Many in the classification originated in the nineteenth century. The background of some comprehensives follows, beginning with the smaller category of Comprehensive II and moving to the larger one of Comprehensive I. References to specific institutions illustrate the general groups.

COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITIES II

The Carnegie classification defines Comprehensive Universities and Colleges II as institutions that "award more than half of their baccalaureate

degrees in two or more occupational or professional disciplines, . . . and many also offer graduate education through the master's degree. All of the colleges and universities in this group enroll between 1,500 and 2,500 students" (*A Classification* 7). Many of them have their roots in a religious affiliation. In addition, in order to survive, colleges and universities in this category often have to carve out a particular niche and personality for themselves.

Private Institutions

Examples of private colleges are Berea College, Azusa Pacific University, and Illinois Wesleyan University.

Berea College in Kentucky began in the reform movements of the last century. A leader in the movement for gradual emancipation invited an outspoken abolitionist religious leader supporting the cause of freedom to establish a settlement where free speech could be maintained. Berea grew out of an anti-slavery church that was organized in 1855. Gradually evolving from a one-room district school in a brier patch into a higher school, the institution worked to ensure a strong interracial character in its constitution. Its original mission, which is still acknowledged, was to provide education for the students of the Appalachian region who could not provide it for themselves. Because of the interruptions resulting from the Civil War during which the college was persecuted as an anti-slavery institution, Berea was not incorporated until 1866 and included primary, intermediate, and academic divisions, including college preparatory. The first baccalaureate degrees were awarded in 1873. The general character of the institution today is still coeducational, Christian, nonsectarian, and nondiscriminatory.

Azusa Pacific University, an independent church-related institution, emerged in 1965 as a new institution of higher learning in California. The

college originated from two independent schools--Azusa College and Los Angeles Pacific College--which merged to form the new college. For sixty years, they had administered academic programs as private, church-related colleges with similar goals, curriculum, and mission. The merger made Azusa Pacific College the official college for the Free Methodist Church in the southwestern United States. By 1981, the college's program and curriculum had developed to university status.

Illinois Wesleyan University was founded in 1850 by thirty community and church leaders who agreed to establish a college-level institution of learning. The name was first intended to be Illinois University, but Wesleyan was inserted, revealing the desire of the founders to make this institution one of more than a dozen American colleges and universities honoring John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. Preparatory school classes were started in 1850 with college classes beginning the following year. The institution has an historic and continuing relationship with the United Methodist Church although the strong religious affiliation was reduced in 1968 when the charter was amended, and now the church appoints only one-fourth of the total number of trustees.

Public Institutions

A common element among the public institutions in this category is their origin as state teachers colleges. Eastern Oregon State College, founded in 1929, is a state-supported liberal arts, business, and teacher education college. Pembroke State University in North Carolina offers liberal arts and sciences programs, teacher education, and professional programs. Bowie State College in Maryland, founded in 1865, is a state-supported liberal arts institution.

Founded in 1872, Concord College in West Virginia is a state-supported liberal arts college and teacher education institution. When the state of West Virginia was founded, the citizens wrote into their constitution a provision for a publicly supported system of education. This provision reflected their understanding of the importance of education in developing the moral and intellectual growth of the individual. To achieve these purposes, the people, through the legislature as their agent, organized a free public school system and a system of publicly supported universities and colleges. As one of the state-supported colleges, Concord is charged with the education of teachers and with the general and liberal education that the West Virginia Board of Education directs and approves. Concord College prepares students for work at the graduate level, in the professions and the arts and sciences, and in terminal professional programs, including teaching in the public schools.

COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITIES I

The Carnegie classification defines Comprehensive Universities and Colleges I as institutions that "offer baccalaureate programs, and, with few exceptions, graduate education through the master's degree. More than half of their baccalaureate degrees are awarded in two or more occupational or professional disciplines. . . . All of the colleges and universities in this group enroll at least 2,500 students" (*A Classification* 7). Some of these institutions had religious origins, but most of them first focused on professional and occupational missions.

Private Institutions

Simmons College, Wake Forest University, and Villanova University are examples of private institutions.

Simmons College in urban Boston is a nonsectarian institution founded at the turn of the century under the will of a Boston businessman who had a novel idea about the higher education of women. John Simmons believed that women should be prepared for lifelong careers in the world of work and human affairs. The college was chartered in 1899 and opened its doors in 1902. At the time it was one of the first colleges in the nation devoted to the career education of women. It was founded to prepare women for specific careers, but since professional education was not enough to equip the graduates for all eventualities, the institution also provided the principles of a liberal arts and sciences education.

Wake Forest University in North Carolina was founded in 1834 as a manifestation of the intellectual and humanitarian reform movement in North Carolina and the nation during the 1830s. The beginnings of the college and its relationship with the Baptist church were closely interwoven. Created by the fiercely independent North Carolina Baptists to serve as an agency for establishing an institution that would provide education under Christian influences, it remained officially affiliated with the church until 1986. The university has survived wars, economic crises and controversy to evolve from a small sectarian school to a small private university with more than 3,600 undergraduates. Today only 20 percent of the students are Baptist, and the university has devoted considerable effort to attract ethnic minority students.

Villanova University in Pennsylvania was founded 148 years ago by the Roman Catholic order of Augustinians, one of the oldest religious teaching orders of the Catholic Church. The first American foundation was established in 1796 at old St. Augustine's Church in Philadelphia. From this foundation, Villanova University traces its lineage. In January 1842, the location was moved to Belle Air, a country estate of the Revolutionary officer John Rudolph,

and was placed under the patronage of a saintly hero of the past, St. Thomas of Villanova--a distinguished Augustinian writer, educator, and bishop of sixteenth-century Spain. In 1848 as the result of a legislative act, the school became Villanova College and began to grant baccalaureate degrees. The institution developed slowly but continuously from 1905, and in 1953 its charter was amended to permit its being designated Villanova University. The Augustinians continue to administer the university and maintain a tradition of social commitment balanced with academic demands and excellence in sports. Eighty percent of the 8,200 undergraduate students are Catholic.

Public Institutions

Public institutions in the Comprehensive I classification include such colleges as West Georgia College, Rutgers University, and Kutztown University.

West Georgia College, a coeducational, liberal arts college, originated as the Fourth District Agricultural and Mechanical School in 1906. Twenty-seven years later, this school became West Georgia College, a junior college. In 1939 the college was authorized by the Board of Regents to add a three-year program in elementary education. In 1957 the institution was allowed to confer the B.S. degree in Education, making it a four-year senior college unit of the University System of Georgia. During the following fourteen years, West Georgia College became one of the fastest growing institutions of higher learning in the South. With the student body doubling almost every four years, the Board of Regents authorized in 1967 the initiation of a graduate program at the master's level. The college's mission is to provide a liberal arts experience as a base for its entire educational program in addition to offering preparation for professional careers.

Rutgers University, Camden, began more than 100 years ago as the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station. The college was originally called Cook College after George H. Cook (1818-1889), renowned geologist, first director of the station, and the person largely responsible for the designation of Rutgers as the land-grant college of New Jersey in 1864. Cook College evolved out the College of Agriculture and Environmental Science and has as its primary objective to provide a sound liberal education while helping students meet the requirements of graduate and professional schools and programs and career opportunities.

The history of Kutztown University begins shortly after the close of the Civil War when the residents of upper Berks County, Pennsylvania, began to build a modern society out of their frontier agricultural community. One of their first concerns was preparation of their children to take their places in the developing industrial economy. Before any of these dreams could be realized, the inadequate supply of school teachers had to be enlarged, and so in 1866 the Keystone Normal School was established. The depth and sophistication of teacher training continued to increase with the complexity of industrialized society, however, and the needs of a burgeoning industrialization in the region placed more and more demands on teacher preparation. In response to this situation, the institution became Kutztown State Teacher's College in 1926 and was authorized to award the bachelor's degree. Soon the area's need for liberally educated personnel to run its industries exceeded its need for teachers. So in 1960, the department of education changed the institution's name to Kutztown State College and diversified its goals toward a center for learning in the arts and sciences and for the preparation of able teachers. Today the institution has become a full-fledged university.

SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERISTICS OF COMPREHENSIVE INSTITUTIONS

Mission and Identity

Background. The mission of an institution is closely tied to its identity. According to the literature contained in many university and college catalogs in the comprehensive classification, these institutions intend to meet society's needs while providing a quality education. Urban universities, a dominant subcategory, focus their missions especially on economic development, diversity, and undereducated ethnic minorities. According to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) in its report *Fulfilling the Urban Mission,* this role has become increasingly important since the 1960s when opportunity for postsecondary education became synonymous with equal opportunity. These institutions now enable students to achieve personal satisfaction as well as economic advancement.

The AASCU reports that in 1968 the first office of urban affairs among the higher education associations was established, thereby reflecting the importance of an urban focus (*Fulfilling* 6). Studies indicate that some institutions may express their urban mission most clearly in their teaching, others in their service programs, and still others in their research (*Fulfilling* 9 and 23). Consequently, in recognizing the importance of service as an educational obligation, comprehensive universities have expanded the amount and range of their services.

In 1969, the institutions had the goal of differentiating their function in order to provide flexibility. At this time they went beyond being multipurpose colleges, and they acknowledged that articulation with community colleges and other universities provided students with a better education and a more efficient use of resources than previously. In 1973, with a view to the year 2000, the

purpose of higher education was once again the subject of inquiry. The Carnegie Commission acknowledged that contributions by higher education change as society changes, and the Commission recommended that these contributions be reevaluated periodically (Carnegie Commission *The Purposes and the Performance* 53). Recently three organizations have devoted their attention to the welfare of urban universities: the Urban Affairs Office of AASCU, the Urban Division of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, and the Association of Urban Universities.

Concerns About Mission. Patrician Crosson in *Public Service at Public Colleges. Mission and Management.* reports the following summary of the missions of the institutions belonging to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

- Nearly all ASSCU institutions recognize academic public service as an institutional responsibility.
- More than half of these institutions do not have formal criteria under which they take on academic public service projects.
- Compatibility of service activity with the institutional mission, interests of the faculty, and potential for success are most important.
- The concerns in the 1970s were educational, and today the concerns are economic development and technology.
- Few differences exist in organizational patterns between the more service-oriented institutions and less service-oriented ones; therefore, the degree of emphasis on public service contributes little to the explanation of organizational differences among colleges.

A more recent ASSCU study reported on by Sheila Kaplan defines comprehensive colleges as liberal arts-based institutions with large professional or career-oriented programs, largely undergraduate, although most offer master's degrees in professional fields, and a small number offer the doctorate. In addition, the state colleges' commitment to the educational needs of first-generation college students is broad. The report concludes with a call that the institutions should be extended to more underserved Americans in the following ways:

- at least 35 percent of American adults have a college degree by the year 2000;
- state colleges and universities produce one million elementary and secondary school teachers for the next decade;
- these institutions work with public schools and community colleges to reduce the high-school dropout rate by 50 percent over the next decade (Kaplan 49).

The California System and Others. The California State University (CSU) system, one of the largest institutions of higher learning in California, evolved over many years to become a twenty-campus system and one of the largest institutions of higher learning in California. The university had its origins in 1857 when California's first normal school opened in San Francisco. By the turn of the century, there were five "normal" schools that almost exclusively served a teacher training function. For almost one hundred years, the state's normal schools--later teachers' colleges and then state colleges--were governed by the State Board of Education. In 1956 one of the colleges, the San Fernando Valley Campus of the Los Angeles State College of Applied Arts and Sciences, was established. Soon after, the California legislature passed

Assemby Bill 971, which provided that this campus would separate from its parent college in 1958 to become San Fernando Valley State College. At that time it enrolled about 3,300 students.

In 1960, under the Master Plan for Higher Education of 1960-1975, the Legislature organized the separate campuses as the California State College System under their own board of trustees. Then in 1972 the Legislature changed the name of the system to the California State University and Colleges, and in 1981 San Fernando Valley State College was renamed California State University, Northridge, by action of the Legislature and the Board of Trustees of the California State University. Today, according to the California Postsecondary Education Commission, enrollments at CSU Northridge exceed 30 thousand, making it the third-largest college or university in Los Angeles County (*Preparing for* .... 7). While each campus in the large system has its own unique curricular character, all campuses offer undergraduate and graduate instruction for professional and occupational goals as well as a broad liberal education.

The California State University (CSU) is an example of the comprehensive university's struggle for status and expanded mission in a politically volatile environment, both internally and externally. Recognized in the 1960 Master Plan review as a system of higher education worthy of a governance structure separate from the California Department of Education, the CSU pressed during the 1987 Review of the Master Plan for Higher Education for a systemwide mission that would grant the universities status as research institutions (August 1987, 47-59). But trapped in a hierarchical structure with the University of California at the top of the state academic pyramid, the CSU system is constrained by a mission that permits the awarding of the master's

degree and not the doctorate and a mission that recognizes "instructionally related research," but not pure research.

Meanwhile, the CSU system has experienced steady enrollment increases so that within the last decade, prior to the opening of the San Marcos campus, the last of its "college" campuses received recognition from the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) as a university. An increasing number of the students coming to the comprehensive institutions over the past two decades are older, part-time students from underrepresented groups (Carnegie, 1990, *Campus*), a trend observable around the country, and one that may continue in the future.* Astin observes that research universities have institutional barriers against increasing the number of underrepresented students. In addition to entrance requirements that many socio-economically disadvantaged students cannot meet, the research universities also give attention to recruiting the best prepared and leave no room for the underrepresented. Astin says that "in particular, the aggressive recruitment of eminent scholars and high-achieving students makes it difficult to accommodate larger numbers of minority and low-income students, many of whom are poorly prepared academically (qtd. in Koepplin 81). Turned away from the

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*According to the Master Plan background papers, the California State University enrollment of female students from 1975 to 1985 increased 52.7 percent, while the University of California had almost the same percentage of male students (52.6 percent) in 1985. Similarly, in 1985 the State University system enrolled 13.2 percent Hispanic and 37.4 percent part-time students, in contrast to the UC's 7.6 percent Hispanic and 7.8 percent part-time student enrollment.

research institutions, many of these students seek out the comprehensive colleges and universities, which, along with the community colleges, have provided a form of "universal access to higher education" (Kerr 155).

The comprehensives have succeeded by being regional colleges. In this role they provide 45 percent of the "senior college" education in the United States ("Carnegie Foundation's Classifications..." 25). In many cases the comprehensive campus is the only four-year institution serving a large georgraphic area. California State University at Chico, for example, serves a twelve-county area in northeastern California that covers an area larger than ten of the states. The University of Nebraska at Omaha is the only public university serving a growing metropolitan area with over 600,000 inhabitants. As regional colleges, the comprehensives have met the challenge of trying to be all things to all people. Rather than comparing them to their research university counterparts, a better comparison is to think of them as four-year community colleges. Like these, they try to respond to specific community needs and the training needs of local employers. Ball State in Indiana is the major provider of professional training in actuarial science and speech pathology. California State University at Humboldt is a major provider of training for regional state jobs in forestry, resource management, and fisheries biology. Despite attempts to shed their image as institutions of "applied science" (Wangberg), the comprehensives have long been the vehicle for training professionals at the bachelor's and master's level. This growth in professional training took place in a post-World War II America that needed trained workers to fill a wide variety of professional positions. With continued growth in these government-sponsored professional positions, the comprehensives were able to provide the appropriate degree certification. Now, before changing away

from this successful niche, the comprehensives need to ask themselves what is being demanded of them by their regional constituency and by the job market. Community colleges have been successful by constantly asking themselves this same question.

Responsibility of and to the State

A state university has various responsibilities in serving the state and its people. One rests with the state to support the university as steadily and generously as the economic resources of the state will allow. When the legislature receives the budget requests developed in good conscience by the university leaders, the budget should reflect what the university requires to meet the needs of the people of that state. When a budget cut is made by the legislature, it means a sacrifice in one or more of the university's functions.

However, there is also a reciprocal responsibility of the state to its university (Morrill 99). The university must keep top-level scholars and teachers, usually through offering competitive salaries. As the student population mushrooms, so does the need for increase in competent faculty. If the salary is insufficient to keep the institution's scholars, the university's reputation is diminished, and the state suffers.

Enlargement through building programs is controlled by the pressure of greater enrollments, not by the wish of the institution to enlarge for its own sake. It is a mission of the university to educate all qualified people of the state, to educate future citizens. It is also the university's obligation to keep tuition and fees as low as possible to allow equal opportunity. There should be no expectation that tuition should ever cover the full cost of instruction or maintenance (Morrill 102), especially when one considers that the state universities are public institutions charged with educating a large portion of the

population and, therefore, are unlike the elite private institutions. The university is accountable to the people of the state and to the legislature for its conduct and use of public funds. The legislature continues to determine base budget allocations and to select the governing board members who will determine how the support will be spent. When the educational role of the United States was made a state's right, federal aid to the land-grant colleges flowed through the states. Thus it has become a state responsibility to work with the university and allow it to provide an education to all of its citizens (Morrill 105).

Changing Role

Despite the broad diversity apparent among these institutions, another significant characteristic, what has been called the "upward drift" of institutions, emerges. Of the 595 institutions identified in the 1987 Carnegie classification, 181--approximately 30 percent--had shifted their category from 1976. From this number, 97 institutions (53 percent) moved **up** while 84 colleges (46 percent) moved **down.** In addition, the greatest shift in the Comprehensive I category occurred where 61 percent of the institutions moved down. In the Comprehensive II category 61 percent of the institutions moved up. The shifts reflect a broadening scope that includes the liberal arts mission. The breakdown is as follows:

Comprehensive I had 60 total shifts.

1 moved **up** to Doctoral I.

22 moved **up** to Doctoral II.

26 moved **down** to Comprehensive II.

9 moved **down** to Liberal Arts I.

2 moved **down** to Liberal Arts II.

Comprehensive II had 121 total shifts.

1 moved **up** to Doctoral II.

73 moved **up** to Comprehensive I.

15 moved **down** to Liberal Arts I.

32 moved **down** to Liberal Arts II. (Table 6:6).

According to Dr. Jack Smart, Vice Chancellor for University Affairs in the California State University system, the CSU does not have a clear identity but is searching for one. Its interest in receiving state authorization for research, which would make it more competitive with the University of California, relates to this problem of mission and identity.

However, one interpretation of the situation posits that if the CSU were able to offer the doctorate, it would compete with the University of California and ultimately become another UC system. The joint doctorate takes some pressure off this upward drift. In fact, it is not the doctorate itself that is so important but the rather the symbolic statement that the higher degree makes to the institution and faculty that they are not second-class citizens. According to Smart, some CSU campuses, like San Diego State, are more capable than others of granting the doctorate, but the state is unlikely to make that investment even though the UC system produces relatively few doctorates to meet the need. Consequently, this function is left largely to private institutions.

MAJOR ISSUES AFFECTING THE COMPREHENSIVES

FINANCING THE COMPREHENSIVES

Historical Review and Cost Analysis. Historically, the finances of publicly supported institutions have been intimately associated with state politics. For example, without the interest of politicians James Carter and Horace Mann, prominent legislators in Massachusetts, the very first normal school would never

have been founded. Equally significant was the private support of Edmund Dwight--a Boston merchant who offered $10,000 with the assurance of a state match of the gift--for the first teachers college to be formed in the United States (Harcleroad and Sagan 50).

From the late 1700s into the 1800s, the histories of these institutions abound with stories of financial and legislative maneuvering. From 1830 through the 1900s, towns would bid against each other for the location of an institution. After winning the bid, the towns levied heavy taxes and demanded gifts or land from the citizenry in order to support the college. Although the towns hoped their institutions would draw business and return local costs, this situation did not always occur (Harcleroad and Sagan 51).

Reports from 103 institutions indicate that in 1900 the average cost of educating a student was $56. In 1925, 190 institutions reported the cost to be $219, and in 1950, 254 institutions reported the cost to be $846. For the same period of time, the faculty-student ratio continued to decrease: 25-1 in 1900; 19-1 in 1925; 14-1 in 1950 (Harcleroad and Sagan 54). This decline was one of the major factors in the increased cost per student.

Data from 1966 reveal the cost per student was $750, a decrease of $86 in sixteen years. Between 1950 and 1966, the total income per institution increased by 617%, far exceeding the rate of inflation and reflecting the growing financial support of these flagship institutions by their legislatures.

Student fees have never paid a major portion of the financing of public institutions. Between 1870 and 1950, student fees averaged 30% of the total income, while in the 1950s, fees generally went down to 12% in the West, with a high of 33% in the Mountain/Plains area (Harcleroad and Sagan 57). With shrinking funding, the governing boards and legislators have become increasingly involved in data that demonstrate the effectiveness of the academic

enterprise with reference not only to the quality of services provided but also to their costs. "The arguments [about accountability]," observes David A. Wilson," "have often gone to the very essence of academic mores" (qtd. in Koepplin 185).

Because the Carnegie Classification of the comprehensive institutions is not specifically addressed in the financial literature on higher education, a focus on state-supported universities can best illustrate the issue of financing.

Higher Education: Who Pays? Who Benefits? Who Should Pay?, a report by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, discusses the difficulties that confront those who attempt to determine the cost of higher education. For example, it notes that foregone earnings are those earnings that are delayed while the student attends school and that significantly add to the costs of education (49). Similarly, measuring the rate of return on the investment in human capital poses problems. The report advances many theories concerning these questions, and these theories help explain the reasons behind the difficulty in relating costs to benefits, especially in societal terms. The 1973 report recommends that the state assume greater responsibility for the well-being of higher education and suggests that a reform in the state tax system could provide greater equity in the financing of education.

As a result of these studies in the early 1970s, two points had become clear: for most colleges and universities, expenditures were growing faster than income, and the projections for the future looked worse. Money problems became the dominant area of concern (Scheit 2). Ernest Boyer, President of the University of New York, succinctly said , "Higher education will be expected to do more with less." Dr. Jack Smart of CSU concurs that the major issue facing most of the comprehensive institutions is the conflict between growth potential

and available budget. There are currently 375,000 students in the CSU system with an anticipated increase to 1.5 million by 2005. At the moment, the CSU budget has been substantially cut because of a major budget deficit at the state level. Thus, the CSU faces severe financial shortfalls at the same time that enrollments are growing.

Financial Trends in the 1980s. The colleges support themselves by intermingling federal, state, student, parent, and philanthropic dollars. At least one quarter of all students today attend a state-supported college or university. Many students choose this type of institution because it is affordable--often $5,000 below the average tuition of a private college or university--and because it offers a comprehensive program. Despite the low tuition and fees, an average four-year public education can cost $20,000 or more, making it still almost too expensive for low-income families. Economic pressure is building at the state level, since the federal government in recent years has had to reduce its support for many domestic programs. Decreased financial aid programs for students, as well as the reduction in various public services, have put pressure on these domestic programs to become more self-sufficient. Higher education has been expected to increase its "user fees," more commonly known as tuition and fees (Harcleroad and Oster 119).

The California State University System in the 1980s and 1990s. California has always had a commitment to postsecondary education as evidenced in its willingness to provide the resources needed to support both quality and access. The state has generally paid for enrollment growth through General Fund Resources. There is reason for concern in this area, since available monies

depend on both availability of revenues and the state's spending limit, with universities being extremely vulnerable to revenue shortfalls.

The Gann Limit, which ties the growth of the budget to the overall state population growth and inflation, remains in effect for the universities (California Postsecondary, *Higher Education* 38). Unlike the K through 12 levels and the community colleges, the state university system remains a budget item for the state legislature and is in competition for monies, as are all other state services. The forecast produced by the Commission on State Finance through 1998 indicates that state revenues are expected to grow at an annual adjusted rate of 2.4 percent without inflation, while state appropriations will be limited to 1.5 percent per year. If enrollment for the university budget is growing faster than the general population, then funding for that growth will have to be found in some other portion of the budget. Presently, the state enrollment alone is growing at 2.3 percent annually. Historically, in addition to enrollment growth, education has received funds for real operating costs, which are also presently rising at 3.8 percent annually without inflation adjustment. Although the university will try to contain costs and find efficiencies, the gaps between expected needs and the state's ability to pay will cause increasing pressures in the years ahead.

AUTONOMY, GOVERNANCE, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Organizational Stress. At the end of the 1970s, Patterson indicates that "245 institutions which were formerly normal schools and were, up to a few years ago (or still are), colleges of education" (4) became state colleges, and he adds that some of them now strive to mimic the research universities (Patterson 8; Koepplin 79). These institutions, then, must struggle with the conflicting missions and values of their original and current functions. Sheldon Rothblatt

emphasizes that the land-grant institutions, some of which later became major research universities and others of which are now comprehensive institutions, focused on "technical not liberal education" (qtd. in Koepplin 43).

Additionally, comprehensive institutions seem at times caught in the trap of legislative disapproval for lack of prestige, while legislative dicta concerning mission and lack of funding often constrain the campuses from developing the research capabilities that would permit the institutions to attain a more prestigious position within higher education.* Don S. Patterson argues that critics of these institutions often are guilty of "judging one school by the image of another" (4), and he observes that among the critics are university colleagues (14). The link between autonomy and quality has been noted in the literature (Flawn 19; Koepplin 190), and Clark Kerr has argued that "full autonomy--to the extent it ever existed--is dead. . . . The 'ivory tower' of yore is now becoming a regulated public utility (qtd. in Flawn 25).

Comprehensive universities and colleges, according to Robert Birnbaum, typically have an internal governance structure that is political. With a senior faculty largely educated within the state and loyal to their disciplines, tension and opposing opinions are the norm in comprehensive institutions. Faculty members devote their energy to teaching but focus on the better students and typically have a 50% retention rate (129). Faculty members

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Dressel argues that as state funding for colleges and universities increases, loss of autonomy also increases: "State legislators in despair of ever satisfying the demands (for more funding) have become increasingly suspicious that inefficiencies in operation and unreasonably low faculty teaching loads generate much of the demand" (6).

would like to offer doctorate programs and often complain about their heavy workload and lack of research support. As a political system, the

would like to offer doctorate programs and often complain about their heavy workload and lack of research support. As a political system, the comprehensive college has a number of what Birnbaum calls "shifting coalitions" that negotiate agreements. A strong sense of community derives from the perception of campus-related individuals as "we" and all outsiders as "they," but he indicates that those terms can also refer to groups within the campus. Organization politics inevitably means a focus on "uncertainty, dissention, and conflict" (129). Burton Clark also references the organizational stress at comprehensive institutions:

> In the many institutional settings where faculty never had much power, *e.g.*, the community colleges and state colleges that have a normal-school genetic imprint, the alternatives [to the apparent "organized anarchy" of research universities] readily capture the imagination. In the research universities, the contest is still open and can be affected one way or the other by the actions of administrators and officials . . . . (qtd. in Koepplin 122)

Conflict results from competition for scarce resources, as the various interest groups seek to gain as much as possible. Within this political atmosphere, administrators derive power from control of budget and personnel, sources of information, and access to legal opinions; faculty members, on the other hand, derive power from their specializations, tradition, and external organizations. Dressel also notes that "[t]he role of administration in higher education has changed from one of enunciating policies and making decisions to a mediating and coordinating role involving extensive consultation and communication with students, faculty, board members, and even the general public" (9).

Thus the early focus on autonomy in terms of state coordination of higher education mentioned by Glenny must now shift to a focus on autonomy both internally and externally, for campus and system administrators are increasingly constrained not only by external demands but also by internal demands from faculty and student groups for a larger voice in governance.

Autonomy in the California State System. For the California State University, lack of autonomy has posed a number of problems. When Chancellor Ann Reynolds, for example, attempted in early spring 1990 to bring the salaries of top administrators into line with salaries at comparable institutions nationwide, she encountered a storm of protest from legislators, faculty, and students, and she set off a political avalanche that utlimately resulted in her departure from the system. Clearly, part of the opposition to the higher salaries stemmed from the perception that the CSU is second-rate, a perception that plagues many comprehensive institutions, since they do not award the doctorate degree and consequently cannot attract large federal grants. In addition, Chancellor Reynolds failed to recognize that not all of the University of California President David Gardner's and other system administrators' salaries come from state funds; therefore, it was possible for newspapers to imply that the CSU administrators were receiving more than comparable administrators in the UC system. More important, Chancellor Reynolds had, for whatever reasons, ignored an earlier legislative demand that increases in the chancellor's salary be communicated to the legislature. This demand represents legislative intrusion into the workings of the university that would be unthinkable with reference to the UC, which enjoys constitutional autonomy. Indeed, the Chronicle of Higher Education *Almanac* reference to this salary dispute notes that it may "threaten" system expansion plans for an additional campus and

states that "[t]he credibility of the system may depend on whoever is chosen to succeed Ms. Reynolds" (32).

DIVERSITY OF STAFF AND STUDENT POPULATION

The faculty of the comprehensive institutions has become increasingly diverse, with greater numbers of women and ethnic minorities. Burton Clark describes the search for qualified faculty, noting the "high degree of institutional competition among the research and would-be research universities that has entailed a heady chase after talent" (qtd. in Koepplin 123). The California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) indicates in a recent study that

> the most talented students--who would be the best candidates for doctoral education--are the most in-demand students outside the faculty marketplace, where the salaries, options to work in a particular geographic area, and promotional opportunities are frequently better than what is available in colleges and universities. (*Planning for a New Faculty* 15)

Data within that report also reveal that the number of ethnic minority Ph.D. recipients has declined over the past several years for American Indian, Black, and Latino/Hispanic students (16-17). Another recent CPEC report, *Toward an Understanding of Campus Climate,* notes that a climate of discrimination against underrepresented students persists within the California higher education systems. With an increasingly diverse student population, the report suggests, campuses must find the means to diversify faculty and provide the means for faculty to understand and meet the needs of underrepresented students. Nationwide, this need for ethnic minority and women faculty members who can teach, counsel, and mentor underrepresented college students is well documented (Levin; Astin). The recent Carnegie report on scholarship notes

that "[w]hile developing a system second to none, we have failed, in this country, to cultivate an appropriately diverse faculty to staff it. Major efforts must be made to recruit minority graduate students for college faculty" (Boyer 66). Indeed, George Keller argues that "demography is to a considerable extent destiny" (12). The search for underrepresented faculty to serve in comprehensive universities and colleges will surely be made more difficult by the fact that the women and ethnic minority doctorate recipients will be aggressively recruited by more prestigious institutions, as well as by business enterprises.

Demands for accountability from higher education nationwide in the form of student outcomes have coincided with an increase in ethnic student representation in the comprehensive colleges and universities. In addition, the change in student population at many comprehensive institutions has accompanied an increasing demand for quality teaching. Paul L. Dressel notes that institutions have experienced an increasing emphasis on institutional research and indicates that the changes of the early 1970s resulted from an enrollment surge: "Size tends to complicate the life of the student and to produce the facelessness that is at the root of much student dissatisfaction" (3). Furthermore, the desire for quality exists not only among students but also among faculty, administrators, governing boards, and legislators, while its nature and measurability remain in dispute and the funds to provide it become increasingly scarce in many states.

ROLES OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH

Typically, comprehensive universities and colleges have experienced a transition to this higher level in the Carnegie classification system. At once proud of their achievement in making the transition from state normal schools or

teachers colleges and anxious to continue the upward movement toward research and doctorate-granting status, the comprehensives have been labeled the "ugly ducklings" of higher education (Carnegie *Campus Life* 62). Perhaps the major issue facing them involves "upward drift" (O'Brien). Must they continue to move upward and become doctorate-granting or research universities in order to succeed, or should they be content to occupy what has been a necessary niche within the hierarchy as "all but the doctorate" colleges? For example, California State University at Chico was founded in 1887 as Northern Branch State Normal School. In 1913 other colleges and universities began to accept its liberal arts students for transfer. Then in 1924, as Chico State Teachers College, it acquired the right to grant the B.A., and eventually the master's degree was offered. It became a university in 1971 as a member of the California State University system. Through steady upward drift, Chico State has been placed in a position where it has only one more clear step to climb, the granting of the doctorate combined with a strong commitment to research.

While the history of these colleges has been one of great change, the current climate in higher education seems to suggest that they have greater potential for success by holding the ground they now occupy rather than by attempting to challenge the research universities for big federal research dollars and the privilege of granting the Ph.D. The very nature of these institutions suggests that this move away from their successful past role might be a mistake.

What is the motive for comprehensives to abandon the role that has been so successful for them in recent decades? Have the needs of their regional constituencies undergone a dramatic change? A look at the value of a degree from a comprehensive university or college suggests just the opposite. It is true that degree inflation has devalued the bachelor's and master's, but the slippage

has hardly been one full degree. In other words, jobs which used to require a B.A. do not now require an M.A. The Ph.D. remains a primarily research-oriented degree, not the degree of the entry-level professional. It may be true, however, that many of the professional positions which have been the lifeblood of the comprehensives are experiencing some slippage. The same students who were virtually guaranteed a government job with a bachelor's or master's in engineering or food science are now facing a job market with far fewer opportunities in the public sector. The students who were recruited from comprehensive colleges in the 1960s are poring over national publications for a job in their field, and many are considering careers which have nothing to do with their training.

Recent cutbacks in state and federal funding in many programs may provide a logical incentive for the comprehensives to look at other ways to succeed. It is more probable, however, that the drive to move upward is coming from the faculty. The push for research and Ph.D.-granting status may be the result of having many faculty members who came from a strong research orientation and an administration that would enjoy the prestige of being a "full university" with all the attendant privileges. A look at the diplomas of the science faculty in the California State University system reveals that fully 73 percent received their doctorate degrees from universities with a Research I rating. For many individuals in science, accepting a position at a state university is not a matter of choice, but rather the consequence of fierce competition for similar positions at the Research I institutions. However, with a heavy teaching load and a college that has not traditionally been effective in drawing the big research grant money, these faculty have often been frustrated. The comprehensive college simply has not provided the environment where research can flourish.

THE FUTURE OF THE COMPREHENSIVES

The issues discussed in this paper suggest a number of concerns for comprehensive institutions to address in the next decade. Four recommendations regarding these areas follow.

RESOLVING MISSION AND IDENTITY

• **Recommendation #1:** *In the coming years comprehensive colleges should address the need to communicate their missions to the public, especially state legislators* (Roskens in Koepplin, 92). *In addition, these institutions should examine the risks involved in trying to challenge research universities for the privilege of granting the doctorate as opposed to establishing a reputation for quality in teaching, a goal more attainable for most of these institutions.*

Unless the leaders of these higher education enterprises can make clear the yardstick by which they should be measured, additional leaders will encounter the frustrations that led to the resignation of CSU Chancellor Ann Reynolds. Just as the community colleges have had to meet the challenge of defining their appropriate roles in American higher education, so also the comprehensives must determine theirs. Academic leaders will have to recognize the increasing diversity of the student population and find ways to meet the needs of these older, part-time, underrepresented individuals. In doing so, they will undoubtedly define a role distinct from that of the research university, a role more concentrated upon teaching than research, and one in which the research itself focuses upon the teaching and learning function. Failure to resolve this problem of mission definition may doom the comprehensive institution to being, in Clark Kerr's words, "so many things to so many different people that it must, of necessity, be partially at war with itself" (8-9).

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR CALIFORNIA AND OTHER STATE UNIVERSITIES

• **Recommendation #2:** *The comprehensive universities and colleges should devote more attention than they now are to identifying alternative funding sources and to increasing cost efficienty.*

When revenues fail to grow consistently, the budget of the state university and of the student aid program tends to be particularly vulnerable because they are not funded through statutory formulae but depend on the annual state budget process for determining funding levels (California Postsecondary *Higher Education* 40). University budgets may actually be cut through executive action even without the permission of the legislature. Under Proposition 98, if revenues fail to grow by at least the amount needed to fully fund K-14 minimum guaranteed spending levels, the university systems will be even more vulnerable to further reductions.

Other states are in a similar bind when they need to respond to increasing enrollments and yet are bound by the limitations of the state budgets. According to Frederick Fischer in the article "State Financing of Higher Education," there is a public responsibility to finance higher education; however, because it involves obsolete state financing policies, it is presently inefficient, inequitable, and ineffective. Because of low-tuition policies that are intended to provide equal access for all, the middle- and upper-class students who populate the universities are being subsidized, while the truly poor students still do not attend the university. Nontuition charges of $2700 annually and students' inability to use the financial aid system keep the poor students out of the university (51).

According to Fischer, the following alternatives could make a direct impact on university financing:

- increase tuition to a level closer to the real costs of education by eliminating subsidies and increasing equity,
- place financial responsibility on the student consumer through a greater share of student aid, and
- make the university autonomous and sheltered from politics by replacing direct payment to colleges with payments to students.

Each state would have to consent to this arrangement in order to prevent competition among states for students. The federal government would have to intercede to take the responsibility for tuition increases and to provide incentives for the state to concede to this revision.

The comprehensive university has had a synergistic relationship with the state in which it resides and whose citizenry it serves; however, once either side becomes unbalanced--whether it be in service or cost effectiveness--serious problems may result. The state universities, which make up a large portion of the comprehensive category of the Carnegie classification, share one disadvantage: complete dependence on the state legislature. In times of cutbacks and recessions, the issue is how the university will survive and continue to strive for excellence and pride while trying to educate citizens within unreasonable cost containment.

ADDRESSING AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

• **Recommendation #3:** *Comprehensive institutions should focus attention on the issues of autonomy and accountability , both internally and externally. Only through careful planning, clear communication of their missions, and attention to outcomes will they gain recognition for their successes.*

Comprehensive institutions in the years ahead must place greater emphasis on planning. According to Keller, "[M]ost colleges and universities have lacked adequate planning, strong internal management, and a transparent set of academic objectives. Higher education has drifted" (25). Noting that "little gets done when the king and the barons of the realm have equal power and different views of where to go or how to proceed (35)," Keller calls for data, objectives, and strategies. Peter Flawn also indicates that academic institutions' biggest threat in the future will come "from attempts by the federal bureaucracy to dictate the form and content of curricula and to control the right of the university to hire and promote based on merit" (72). Institutions must document student learning outcomes and must show increased commitment to faculty and student diversity and to meeting the specified missions of the institution, or they will face possibly intolerable federal mandates for unwanted change. Failure to meet these challenges will result in further loss of autonomy and the gradual development of a national education system. Clark Kerr comments, "How important to the university are its autonomy and its financing from a series of independent sources; how significant that there is no one master but rather a series of fifty states and of many independent private boards" (181).

TEACHING VS. RESEARCH

• **Recommendation #4:** *Comprehensive institutions must develop a form of research appropriate to their mission as nondoctoral colleges or establish joint efforts with major research universities. At the same time, comprehensive institutions should seek the means to preserve the quality of undergraduate teaching.*

Faculty members at comprehensive institutions will probably have to undertake research as best they can in addition to their teaching loads. Patterson argues that "faculty members will need to lift themselves by their bootstraps and do research on their own time" (10). Clearly, many CSU faculty already engage in research activities, and one must assume that the same is true of faculty in comprehensive institutions nationwide. These research activities are geared not solely to augmenting faculty presitge but also to providing students with a full educational experience, a pursuit that must be extended to students at the undergraduate level (Rothblatt in Koepplin, 62; Van Horn in Koepplin, 29). In disciplines where national funding agencies will not award research grants to faculty at comprehensive institutions, faculty members will have to devise other means for pursuing research or alter the nature of the research they undertake (Patterson 8).

The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) has dealt with the research issue in a number of publications and conferences in recent years. An AASCU conference at California State University, Long Beach, in 1988 addressed three major issues: the integration of teaching and research, the need for additional resources to fund research, and the possible negative effects of research on undergraduate education.

One conclusion regarding the integration of teaching and research was that research at the comprehensive university differs in no essential way from research at the research university. The only difference is that the research projects are smaller, have less time commitment from the faculty, and must be done with fewer dollars. To a scientist, rather than being minor details, these are all crucial factors in a highly competitive world research arena. The conference also emphasized that the comprehensive colleges have traditionally fared rather poorly in competition for the big federal research dollars.

With reference to the need for additional resources to fund research, an internal administrative study at California State University at Chico points out that all research is basically equivalent, no matter where it is performed (Wangberg). The study also addresses the stereotype that the role of the comprehensive university is to do applied research, not basic or theoretical research. Wangberg suggests that even scientists do not know where to draw the line between the two. This statement is most revealing in demonstrating that the comprehensive universities are seeking prestige through their increasing interest in research. Scientists clearly know the difference between the costly, time-consuming, and prestigious basic research and the more mundane and less prestigious applied research. The value judgment is felt by many faculty to be unjust, but it still clearly exists in the scientific community. The master's thesis is considered to be an applied degree, the Ph.D. a theoretical one. Doing theoretical research demands a total commitment if an individual is to be successful in today's research community. Wangberg supports her own contention that the comprehensives are, in fact, research institutions by pointing out that, nationally, the comprehensives average $3.4 million annually in research funding per campus. Rather than proving her point, she has simply shown how little of the federal research pie the comprehensives actually receive. That tiny amount would constitute the annual research funding for a single department at many of the major research universities. With a teaching load that averages 12.3 units per semester and very little institutional support in facilities, equipment, or research dollars, faculty at comprehensive universities are not in a position to compete for major research dollars.

Many studies have documented the possible negative effects that research has on undergraduate education (Levine), and faculty at the research institutions openly acknowledge this fact. The time demands of cutting-edge

research take away from time for undergraduate education. The usual argument about research making faculty more stimulating and effective in the classroom is not borne out by student surveys (Levine 13). The positive benefits to graduate students are just as widely agreed upon. Faculty members working side by side with graduate students have a positive effect on graduate student experience and learning. The fact that, in California, the California State University system now grants twice as many master's degrees as the University of California demonstrates a need for an effective M.A. program, and this judgment means that research should be an integral part of that program. The very nature of the M.A. as a degree where research skills are learned, not perfected, should give the comprehensive universities their direction. Research is definitely needed, but its purpose should be to serve graduate education, not to serve the needs of frustrated faculty and administrators. In this niche, the comprehensive colleges can flourish.

If faculty members believe they need to be involved in basic research, they should participate in cooperative efforts with research universities or leave the comprehensive colleges. The benefits of some research in the comprehensive university are clear. The strategy of trying to compete with the research universities for the major research dollars will continue to be a futile effort.

CONCLUSION

The comprehensives have a long and detailed history closely associated with the development of our country. Their mission, their tie to the legislature, their funding dependence, and their accountability are all being reviewed. The comprehensives are growing and changing. Struggles will exist in the future until they make their purpose clear. Questions to be resolved, such as the role

of research and teaching, the granting of the doctoral dgree, and the funding dilemma may well be answered with a clear, well-defined mission. A sense of clarity is now needed to carry these institutions into the 21st century. Historically they have changed as the needs of our country have changed, and the decisions that lie ahead are but challenges to meet the needs of today and the visions for tomorrow.

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